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AUTHOR Gilman, Peter J.
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ABSTRACT

To determine the current perception of the teacher education leadership in Texas regarding the importance or value of accreditation by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE), a questionnaire was sent to the deans and chairmen of colleges, schools, and departments of education throughout the state. There are 64 colleges or universities in Texas with state-approved teacher education programs. Thirty Texas programs are accredited by NCATE. Twenty of the NCATE-approved schools are state supported and 10 are private. Responses were received from 58 of the 64 institutions for a 91 percent return. Of the responses, 29 were from NCATE-accredited institutions and 29 from non-NCATE institutions. This document presents a summary of the responses from these institutions. Responses are presented on the final question, which asked about advantages or disadvantages attributed to seeking and attaining NCATE accreditation. Most respondents listed the time and expense of self-study preparation and the NCATE visit as disadvantages. Advantages included prestige associated with NCATE accreditation and possible reciprocal certification benefits among states. (JD)

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Texas Deans Look at NCATE

Peter J. Gilman
Hardin-Simmons University
Irvin School of Education
Abilene, Texas

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Much has been written in recent years concerning the positive and negative aspects of accreditation of teacher education programs. An in-depth study was conducted by the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire in 1981 with regard to the value and need for accreditation by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE).

In many meetings this writer attended accreditation was a major topic of discussion. The opinions given were usually skewed in the direction of the most vocal participants. In order to determine the current perception of the teacher education leadership in Texas, regarding the importance or value of NCATE accreditation, a questionnaire was sent to the deans and chairmen of Colleges, Schools and Departments of Education throughout the state.

There are 64 colleges or universities in Texas with state approved teacher education programs. According to the NCATE Twenty-Ninth Annual List of Accredited Programs, 30 Texas programs are accredited by NCATE. Twenty of the NCATE approved schools are state supported and 10 are private institutions.

Responses were received from 58 of the 64 institutions for a 91% return. Of the responses, 29 were from NCATE accredited institutions and 29 from non-NCATE institutions.

A summary of the responses from the 29 NCATE accredited institutions includes:

1. Of the 29 NCATE accredited institutions 23 plan to seek reaccreditation, 5 are undecided and 1 does not plan to seek reaccreditation.

2. Nineteen respondents felt that NCATE accreditation increased the quality of their teacher education program, while 6 did not and 4 were undecided as to the effect on their program's quality.

3. Ten respondents felt that the absence of NCATE accreditation would have adverse effects on the quality of their teacher education program, 5 did not and 1 was undecided.

4. Seven respondents felt the size of the institution and the number of programs offered should determine whether to seek NCATE accreditation while 21 disagreed and 1 was undecided.

5. Fourteen responses indicated that all teacher education programs, regardless of size, should be NCATE accredited, 13 disagreed and 1 was undecided.

6. Five respondents felt it more important for larger institutions to be NCATE accredited, while 19 felt it was not.

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7. Three respondents felt it more important for smaller institutions to be NCATE accredited, while 18 felt it was not.

8. The Texas and regional approval standards were considered sufficient by 12 respondents, insufficient by 15 respondents and 2 responses were conditional in favor of the state standards.

A summary of the responses from the 29 non-NCATE institutions includes:

1. Of the 29 non-NCATE accredited institutions 1 plans to seek accreditation 15 do not and 13 are undecided.

2. Seventeen of the respondents felt that NCATE accreditation would not increase the quality of their teacher education program. No respondents perceived NCATE accreditation as increasing the quality of their teacher education programs.

3. Twenty-eight felt that the absence of NCATE accreditation had no adverse effects on their teacher education programs.

4. Seven respondents felt the size of the institutions and the number of programs offered should determine whether to seek NCATE accreditation while 18 disagreed and 2 felt it might.

5. One respondent indicated that all teacher education programs, regardless of size, should be NCATE accredited, 25 disagreed and 1 was undecided.

6. Nine respondents felt it more important for larger institutions to be NCATE accredited while 16 did not.

7. One respondent felt it more important for smaller institutions to be NCATE accredited, while 27 did not.

8. The Texas and regional approval standards were considered sufficient by 27 respondents, insufficient by 1 and 1 felt they should be sufficient.

The final question asked the respondents to list any particular advantages or disadvantages they attributed to seeking and attaining NCATE accreditation. Numerous and varied responses were given. Most respondents listed the time and expense of the self-study preparation and the visit as disadvantages. Time and expenditures were considered excessive by most. Advantages listed most often included the prestige associated with NCATE accreditation and the possible reciprocal certification benefits among states.

A complete copy of the results may be obtained by sending a stamped, self-addressed legal size envelope to Dean, School of Education, Hardin-Simmons University, Abilene, Texas 79698.

NCATE Accredited Schools

NCATE QUESTIONNAIRE

code # _____

1. Name of Institution (optional) _____

2. Name of Respondent (optional) _____

Circle the appropriate responses.

3. Is your institution NCATE accredited? YES 29 NO

   A. If yes do you plan to seek reaccreditation when your current accreditation expires? YES 23 NO 1 undecided 5

   B. If no do you plan to seek accreditation in the future? YES NO UNDECIDED

4. Does NCATE accreditation increase the quality of your teacher education program? YES 19 NO 6 undecided 4

5. Does the absence of NCATE accreditation have any adverse affects on the quality of your teacher education programs? YES 10 NO 5 undecided 1

6. Should the size of the institution and number of programs offered determine whether to seek NCATE accreditation? YES 7 NO 21 undecided 1

   Circle the following choices you prefer.

   A. All colleges with teacher education programs, regardless of size, should be NCATE accredited. YES 14 NO 13 undecided 1

   B. It is more important for larger institutions to be NCATE accredited. YES 5 NO 14

   C. It is more important for smaller institutions to be NCATE accredited. YES 3 NO 18

7. Texas Institutional Approval Standards along with regional approval are sufficient to insure quality teacher education programs in the state. undecided but tend to agree 2 AGREE 12 DISAGREE 15

8. Please list any particular advantages or disadvantages you attribute to seeking and attaining NCATE accreditation.

Non - NCATE Accredited Schools

NCATE QUESTIONNAIRE code # _____

1. Name of Institution (optional) _____.

2. Name of Respondent (optional) _____.

Circle the appropriate responses.

3. Is your institution NCATE accredited? YES NO
29

A. If yes do you plan to seek reaccreditation when your current accreditation expires? YES NO

B. If no do you plan to seek accreditation in the future? YES NO UNDECIDED
1 15 13

4. Does NCATE accreditation increase the quality of your teacher education program? YES NO
0 17

5. Does the absence of NCATE accreditation have any adverse affects on the quality of your teacher education programs? YES NO
0 28

6. Should the size of the institution and number of programs offered determine whether to seek NCATE accreditation? YES NO undecided
7 18 2

Circle the following choices you prefer.

A. All colleges with teacher education programs, regardless of size, should be NCATE accredited. YES NO Undecided
1 35 1

B. It is more important for larger institutions to be NCATE accredited. YES NO
9 16

C. It is more important for smaller institutions to be NCATE accredited. YES NO
1 22

7. Texas Institutional Approval Standards along with regional approval are sufficient to insure quality teacher education programs in the state.

AGREE DISAGREE should be
27 1 1

8. Please list any particular advantages or disadvantages you attribute to seeking and attaining NCATE accreditation.

QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSES

Question #	NCATE Accreditated Institutions (29)			Non - NCATE Accreditated Institutions (29)			Total Responses (58)		
	Yes	No	Undecided	Yes	No	Undecided	Yes	No	Undecided
3. A.	23	1	5				23	1	5
3. B.				1	15	13	1	15	13
4.	19	6	4	0	17	0	19	23	4
5.	10	5	1	0	28	0	10	33	1
6.	7	21	1	7	18	2	14	39	3
6A	14	13	1	1	25	1	15	38	2
6B	5	19	0	9	16	0	14	35	0
6C	3	18	0	1	22	0	4	40	0
7.	12	15	2	27	1	1	39	16	3

Review of the responses from the 29 NCATE accredited institutions.

3.A. Of the 29 NCATE accreditated institutions 23 plan to seek reaccreditation, 5 are undecided and 1 does not plan to seek reaccreditation.

4. 19 respondents felt that NCATE accrecitation increased the quality of their teacher education program, while 6 did not and 4 were undecided as to the effect on their program's quality.

5. 10 respondents felt that the absence of NCATE accreditation would have adverse effects on the quality of their teacher education program, 5 did not and 1 was undecided.

6. 7 respondents felt the size of the institution and the number of programs offered should determine whether to seek NCATE accreditation while 21 disagreed and 1 was undecided.

6.A. 14 responses indicated that all teacher education programs, regardless of size, should be NCATE accredited, 13 disagreed and 1 was undecided.

6.B. 5 respondents felt it more important for larger institutions to be NCATE accredited, while 19 felt it was not.

6.C. 3 respondents felt it more important for smaller institutions to be NCATE accredited, while 18 felt it was not.

7. The Texas and regional approval standards were considered sufficient by 12 respondents, insufficient by 15 respondents and 2 responses were conditional in favor of the state standards.

Review of the responses from the 29 Non - NCATE accredited institutions.

3.B. Of the 29 non - NCATE accredited institutions 1 plans to see accreditation 15 do not and 13 are undecided.

4. 17 of the respondents felt that NCATE accreditation would not increase the quality of their teacher education program. No respondents perceived NCATE accreditation as increasing the quality of their teacher education programs.

5. 28 respondents felt that the absence of NCATE accreditation had no adverse effects on their teacher education programs.

6. 7 respondents felt the size of the institutions and the number of programs offered should determine whether to seek NCATE accreditation while 18 disagreed and 2 felt it might.

6.A. 1 respondent indicated that all teacher education programs, regardless of size, should be NCATE accredited, 25 disagreed and 1 was undecided.

6.B. 9 respondents felt it more important for larger institutions to be NCATE accredited while 16 did not.

6.C. 1 respondent felt it more important for smaller institutions to be NCATE accredited, while 22 did not.

7. The Texas and regional approval standards were considered sufficient by 27 respondents, insufficient by 1 and 1 felt they should be sufficient.

8. Please list any particular advantages or disadvantages you attribute to seeking and attaining NCATE accreditation.

The time required for this self-study and the expense involved are too great when compared with dubious benefits.

The only benefit of significance is the prestige and recognition that may accrue.

Students seeking certification in other states.

It is the single accrediting agency for teacher education recognized by the U. S. Government.

NCATE insists on control of teacher education by teacher educators.

Demands systematic program planning

Disadvantages - Time, expenses

Several states base teaching certification reciprocity on IHE's accreditation status.

Attracting and retaining out-of-state students

Advantage - Local campus academic status
Disadvantages - Time and $ required
Duplicate self studies

Disadvantages: The expense of the self-study, both in terms of dollars and personnel, is so great that the advantages of NCATE are outweighed by the demands placed on an institution as small as ours. (2) TEA standards are so closely aligned with NCATE standards that the NCATE self-study is essentially a duplication of effort.

Cooperation between states on certification

The self-study is worthwhile and somewhat more intensive than TEA even though TEA is critical in Texas.

Prestige (internally & externally)

Certification reciprocity with other states

Accreditation process (self-study, standards, etc.)

Money, time involved, lack of hard data that accreditation equals "quality."

The expense is getting to be a burden. Just paid out almost $500.

Advantages for our graduates seeking certification in other states

Improved quality control for our program.

8. Continued

Advantages: Reciprocity
Disadvantages: Cost - once approved it develops a sense of complacency until the next visit.

Teaching is a profession. Those schools with professional certification programs should be NCATE accredited. If a school has only undergraduate teacher education then state and regional standards are sufficient. Not necessarily the size, but kinds of programs. Small enrollment schools with professional (graduate) programs should be NCATE accredited.

Every group that seeks professional status must have an autonomous peer review process for quality control. To turn this responsibility totally over to any state or national agency is to negate the whole idea of professionalism. The profession itself must establish the standards and develop the procedure to enforce them.

Standards are stronger, less localized, less political. TEA has not really denied any college or university.

State and regional standards are on the up-grade, and they provide considerable guidance and incentive. However, political consideration, timidity on the part of state officials, and other factors often lead to weak enforcement of standards. A strong, impartial, objective approval at the national level is the only sure way to enforce adequate standards. Institutions with national accreditation can offer much more to their students.

Requires program review and evaluation. Gives an opprotunity for out-of-state people to look at program.

Advantage of reciprocity among states.

Clearer statement of written standards

A more consistent application of standards to all institutions.

NCATE has more objective team members with no in-state jealousies.

National acceptance

Quality programs

Permits the institution to examine its programs and to compare them with a set of standards.

Provides for 3rd party view of our programs, thus stimulating faculty to a broader view.

Provide for the profession a standard for all teacher education institutions to meet, regardless of their size and location and of the comprehensiveness of their state guidelines.

No. 8

Gives each institution seeking faculty or evaluating transcripts a degree of confidence in the integrity of their programs.

Disadvantages - Costs associated with dues and vistits. These are offset by advantages.

Funding, particularly of the indirect type, tends to increase - often rather dramatically.

Central administrators have greater knowledge of and commitment to teacher education programs of the institution.

There tends to be a campus-wide increased recognition of the special characteristics and needs of sound teacher education programs.

Administrators of the teacher education program have a more direct means of reporting to central administrators.

It is an important lever for obtaining appropriate facilties, equipment, materials, advisement, governance, laboratory and clinical experiences, depth & breadth of the professional dimensions of programs, and numbers of faculty and staff.

Students, especially those who belong to SNEA, are very much aware of the quality indicator accreditation is.

Accreditation provides status in that it shows the teacher education programs meet national quality standards.

It stimulates and enhances faculty scholarly activity because such productivity tends to be valued, encouraged, and rewarded more, hence the climate for it is better.

The advantage is more for the graduate rather than the institution.

9. Please list particular advantages or disadvantages you attribute to not being NCATE accredited.

The cost of the process in dollars and man power is too much. Some states require NCATE accreditation for certification of graduates. Too much external control of programs through standards which have nothing to do with quality.

Disadvantages: Prestige

Advantages: Greater flexibility to meet regional and state needs.

Some states require NCATE accreditation for transfer students.

Disadvantages: The institution has not subjected itself to evaluation by the profession itself on a national basis.

NCATE shows a commitment to quality, in identity with the profession and belief in the educational enterprise.

No. 9 continued

The only disadvantage is the time and money saved on the accreditation process. Not being accredited opens you up to the suspicion of inadequate quality, and fear of being exposed as a poor program.

Cannot think of any except some advantage in reciprocity.

Lack of national acceptance

Difficulties obtaining certification in other states.

Advantage: Save a few dollars.

It does not have to put itself up for scrutiny by its peers in the academic community, thus it can brag about the quality of its teacher education programs without showing that it meets national quality standards.

It can continue to underfund and other wise under support its teacher education programs; it can continue to exploit teacher education to enhance other programs and activities it offers.

It can save the money it would other wise spend on preparing for the visit, the team visit, and annual dues.

It can hide weak programs and faculties in teacher education.

Saves money

Saves a lot of time

Some standards are meaningless

10. Please make any comments or explanations of previous answers you desire.

If an institution plans to seek accreditation, the chairperson of the visiting committee is the key.

All Wisconsin schools considered dropping NCATE last year - Do you know the results?

I have not yet been through the NCATE process. It is coming up next year (mini-visit). I do feel strongly that any institution with graduate teacher education should be NCATE accredited.

Let's be sure we don't throw the baby out with the bath.

In the United States there must be a national level of accreditation. Local, state, and regional is not adequate for a dynamic profession.

NCATE is more thorough on application of standards to a campus.

Multicultural education and special education given more specific attention by NCATE.

No. 10.

I am not sure NCATE accreditation is all that helpful. I do not think membership has a lot to do with quality.

I do not understand the purpose of item 6; the size of institution or number of programs has little relevance in the context of accreditation since it has to do with meeting quality standards.

One of the most misunderstood relationships in the field of teacher education is that between state approval and professional (as opposed to regional) accreditation. The former has to do with making sure that minimum acceptable standards are met and maintained. The latter has to do with showing that national quality standards are met. State approval is mandatory. Professional accreditation is voluntary. Standards for approval differ in scope and rigor from one state to another; professional accreditation standards are the same across the country. Regional accreditation focuses on the institution as a whole, not on teacher education as professional accreditation does. Since regional accredition is practically mandatory, it is tantamount to approval for the institution to operate in many states.

It is almost necessary to be accredited to protect graduates who move out of state. Otherwise, I'd like to see NCATE disappear. It is too much work, expense, etc.

8. Please list any particular advantages or disadvantages you attribute to seeking and attaining NCATE accreditation.

Possible advantages
1. Mobility of graduates to other states (though this has NOT been any problem for our graduates - we have them teaching in Idaho, New Mexico, Georgia, New York, etc. and NCATE has never come up in their reciprocal certification.).
2. Prestige for recruiting (but most prospective students do not know it or care much about NCATE, I venture!)

Disadvantages
1. Duplicates effort and time - TEA comes every five years, Southern Association every 10 - another self-study for NCATE burdens faculty and staff.
2. Added expense.
3. Rejection could be detrimental, although perhaps unwarranted, while approval may bring no tangible benefits.
4. Whether or not one agrees, education is a state's responsibility. Let us strengthen state and regional accrediting. They can be more responsive to varying needs from state to state.

Status only--advantage

Advantage - National respect and publicity
Disadvantage - More external controls on program.
More reports and visits to prepare and achieve accreditation.

Neutral

The major disadvantage to NCATE accreditation is that it adds yet another self-study to institutions overburdened with continuous state and regional self-studies. An institution with forty faculty members needs to focus its energies in quality programs rather than continous self-study.

None unless certification is somehow tied to NCATE.

I think they rather weigh each other out. The cost and time elements outweigh the benefits.

Our teacher education graduates serve a local and limited market and NCATE accreditation is not necessary.

Disadvantage: cost, time

A Disadvantage is the loss of time in accreditation preparation and visits and the cost.
Our standards are higher thar NCATE in our opinion!

If an institution prepares a significant number of teachers who move to other states, probably NCATE accreditation would be an advantage

The cost is too high unless you have a "significant" number of graduates seeking jobs outside the state.

No. 8 continued

Disadvantages: Standards are vague

Accreditation or disaccreditation depends more on the way the visiting team writes the report than on the quality of the program.

Expense

Helps to insure at least a minimum of quality consistency among teacher education programs.

Allows/encourages IHE's to seek more than state level measures of excellence.

Disadvantages: Cost, hassle, NCATE standards (and the various applications & interpretations) can bring about/force change merely for change sake, which is undesirable.

Advantages of accreditation do not compensate for time/effort expended seeking accreditation.

Advantages would relate primarily to perceived status.

None of our graduate students seeking additional degrees from major institutions across the U.S. have had any trouble being admitted.

9. Please list particular advantages or disadvantages you attribute to not being NCATE accredited.

The only disadvantage I am aware of personally is when students from in-state non-NCATE institutions transfer to out-of-state NCATE institutions. They are usually required to take additional coursework.

No real disadvantages evident.
Advantage is greater freedom to innovate, having won state approval for a non-traditional, 5 year program.

Personnel-disadvantage

Less governing control from external sources.

Occasionally, transfer students want an explanation.

Neutral

Advantages for a small school do not compensate for the financial outlay and the cost in faculty (small faculty) time.

Economic savings is an advantage.

Advantage: Saves money.

Disadvantages: None that I know.
Advantages: Save time and money. Re: not prepare for visit.

No. 9

Advantages:
We seldom if ever change over curricula or administrative practice without consulting the NCATE standard - the advantage of having the standards without the accreditation is similar to working for a union wage without paying dues.
Disadvantages:
At present we (Texas) are on the receiving end of the population shift--however, our grads have (at least 1 has) experienced some difficulty in having their certificate recognized/accepted out of state because we do not have NCATE accreditation. I think this will increase over time.

I can see no disadvantage to not being NCATE accredited.

One less self-study to do. A savings of a great deal of money.

For our institution I see no particular advantages or disadvantages.

No cost, no hassle, no meetings. Most students leaving high school and looking for a college, don't know NCATE from NCAA. I doubt that being an NCATE school is much of an advantage in recruiting or a detriment either.

Advantages. 1) The money saved can be used for program improvement.
2) Less hassle.
Disadvantage: 1) All in-depth evaluation of the teacher education program is by in-state people.

10. Please make any comments or explanations of previous answers you desire.

Advantages and disadvantages cancel each other, hence, neutral.

Since we offer an undergraduate program and one "terminal" graduate program, we would not benefit from NCATE. In a school with several graduate (including doctorate) programs in education, I think NCATE accreditation may be necessary.

I have not been impressed with the quality of some of the institutions that have long histories of NCATE accreditation and I have been very impressed by other IHE's that have never considered it. Apparently, like TEA standards, NCATE teams have been satisfied if IHE's doing "the best they can" regardless of the quality of the programs.

At one time I was firmly convinced that NCATE was the answer to insuring quality programs. I am no longer convinced. Having served on six visitation committees I have serious reservations about the reliability of the recommendations of this group. Essentially, I believe, my disappointment with NCATE has to do with my perception that they have become concerned with the "letter" rather than the spirit" of the law. My original belief that the standards proposed could be creatively implemented through the particular conditions of an institution have been replaced by the realization that an institution will be shaped by specific practices determined to have met the standard. While I agree with the standards of NCATE, I find it too insensitive to individual differences. Probably its best service would be to serve an informational and advocate role to insure congruency of programs and standards among and between states.

I previously served an institution which had a terrible time with NCATE. I have very little respect for the current state of affairs in NCATE although I believe, at least partially, in what the council is trying to do, i.e., upgrade the quality of teacher education programs.